

CITY OF SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA  
**COUNCIL POLICY**

SUBJECT: COMPREHENSIVE POLICY FOR A SUSTAINABLE WATER SUPPLY IN SAN DIEGO

POLICY NO.: 400-

EFFECTIVE DATE:

**BACKGROUND:**

San Diego's economy and quality of life depend on a reliable and financially viable supply of water. The City of San Diego needs to establish guiding principles through which we will ensure that our water supply remains secure.

Our City and region are facing and will continue to face uncertainties and challenges to our water supply reliability because of issues related to trending drought, pumping restrictions and hydrology in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, hydrology in Lake Mead and the Colorado River systems, and the effects of Climate Change.

To prepare for the challenges facing our City and region, the San Diego City Council must have comprehensive policies that embrace new technologies and innovation, encourage collaboration on all levels, and contain performance measures and regular review to ensure that they are up-to-date.

**PURPOSE:**

To establish policies to assure an adequate water supply for the City of San Diego, including the following principles:

- Cohesive elements that are financially and environmentally sound.
- Support the concept that water, wastewater and storm water systems can be used together to ensure future water supplies.
- Goals which reflect current water treatment, system maintenance, storage, distribution and usage technologies and allow the consideration of new technologies or opportunities.
- Collaboration with local and regional stakeholders, agencies and partners for securing water reliability.
- Collaboration with private and public agencies for infrastructure financing.
- Incorporating the balance between water demand and water supply in all future land-use and planning decisions.

CITY OF SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA  
**COUNCIL POLICY**

- Development of a diverse portfolio of cost-effective local sources of water.

POLICY:

For ease of organization, the following policies are categorized as either general, or related to water quality, conservation, importation and local and regional supplies.

A. General

It is the policy of the City Council that:

1. The Mayor, Public Utilities Department or the Mayor's designee, shall advise the City Council or Council committee regularly on the City's current and future water supplies.
2. The Mayor and Intergovernmental Relations Director shall monitor legislative and regulatory actions, court decisions, and other events that could affect the City's water supply and report to the City Council on a bi-annual basis.
3. The San Diego County Water Authority (CWA) is recognized as the lead agency for procuring imported water to meet the present and long term needs of the City and the San Diego region. As a member of CWA, the City of San Diego shall assist CWA as needed in working with the Metropolitan Water District (MWD), the State Department of Water Resources (DWR), the County of San Diego, other local water agencies, and the private sector in efforts to satisfy the future water requirements of the region.
4. The Mayor and the Public Utilities Director shall work closely with the City Council appointed representatives to the CWA Board of Directors in pursuit of an adequate water supply in the future and management of costs for ratepayers.
5. City of San Diego appointees to the CWA Board of Directors shall report to the City Council on a bi-annual basis for the purpose of discussing water issues. At this bi-annual meeting, discussion will focus on a Work Program prepared by the Public Utilities Director with the assistance from the CWA representatives. The Work Program will outline proposals which the CWA representatives would recommend the City support to gain a sustainable water supply.
6. The Independent Rates Oversight Committee (IROC) shall report to the City Council on a bi-annual basis for the purpose of discussing water issues related to its activities and annual reports.

It is the policy of the City Council to:

7. Support economically sound activities that create an affordable and reliable water supply to attract,

## COUNCIL POLICY

retain and expand business, and promote an excellent quality of life for our residents.

8. Support land-use decisions that are aligned with the City's Urban Water Management Plan and the City's General Plan.
9. Support the appropriate use of Water Supply Assessments related to land-use decisions.
10. Support and partner with businesses and organizations that incubate practical new technologies and scientific research to assist the City in developing a sustainable water supply.
11. Support and partner with businesses and organizations that can provide assistance to the City in water, wastewater and storm water facilities planning in order to mitigate and prepare for Climate Change and other infrastructure challenges and uncertainties.
12. Support public-public and public-private partnerships to finance infrastructure projects and new local and regional water sources.
13. Support the implementation and update all of the City's water planning documents, including the Long-Range Water Resources Management Plan, Recycled Water Master Plan (San Diego Municipal Code Chapter 6, Article 4, Division 8) and Urban Water Management Plan (State Water Code, Division 6, Sections 10610 through 10656).

### B. Quality

It is the policy of the City Council to:

1. Provide its potable water customers with potable water that meets or exceeds all regulations and health standards established by Federal, State and County regulatory agencies.
2. Provide its non-potable water customers with non-potable water that meets or exceeds all health and industrial standards established by State and County regulatory agencies. In addition, support infrastructure improvements that decrease salinity and other contaminants that may adversely affect facilities that use recycled water.
3. Monitor the review and potential promulgation of regulations pertaining to Contaminants of Concern by the United States Environmental Protection Agency.

### C. Conservation

It is the policy of the City Council to:

CITY OF SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA  
**COUNCIL POLICY**

1. Support a multi-class, tiered rate or allocation pricing structure for water customers that encourages conservation and discourages waste; supports the needs of private sector businesses and agriculture; and takes into account specific data such as Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data, single parcel information, geographic zones and evapotranspiration rates.
2. Support rebates and other economic incentive programs to encourage water conservation, partnering with the CWA, MWD, State and Federal Government for funding. To ensure the public is aware, economic incentive programs should be included in outreach and education programs.
3. Support local and regional education and outreach programs emphasizing conservation and water efficient landscaping. Public outreach on water awareness should stress the mutual benefit of reduction efforts and using water efficient technologies as well as demonstration projects.
4. Explore the feasibility of authorizing exchange of water by customers, through water credit trading or other similar programs that encourage conservation.
5. Support the pre-treatment of industrial wastewater to conserve potable water normally used for dilution.
6. Support implementation of Council Policy 900-14, Sustainable Building Policy for municipal development, and any other future sustainable building policies that may be developed to help the City conserve water.
7. Support and implement the City of San Diego's Drought Emergency Restrictions in Municipal Code Chapter 6, Article 7, Division 38 as necessary.
8. Support the City's implementation of the California Green Building Standards Code.

D. Importation

1. Support the concept that reliable and inexpensive imported water sources are finite.
2. Support economically sound activities that reduce the City's reliance on imported sources of water and increase local supplies.
3. Support efforts by CWA and others to seek new, cost-effective water supply sources.
4. Support pricing and repayment policies for all future water contracts and all future projects that shall ensure that beneficiaries pay their full share of costs associated with development and operation of those facilities.

CITY OF SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA  
**COUNCIL POLICY**

5. Identify and support water transfer and storage opportunities between local and regional suppliers as authorized by State Water Code Division 1, Chapter 7.

E. Local and Regional Supply

1. Support development of a local water supply to meet present and future needs.
2. Support the continued cost-effective expansion of non-potable recycled water for purposes allowed under Title 22, Article 3 of the California Code of Regulations.
3. Support a rate structure for non-potable recycled water that encourages the use and facilitates cost-effective expansion of non-potable recycled water infrastructure.
4. Support simplification of regulatory approval for the use of non-potable recycled water for residential landscape irrigation.
5. Support small/medium scale wastewater recycling projects for industrial and irrigation purposes where feasible.
6. Support indirect potable reuse (IPR) if the Water Purification Demonstration Project is successful.
7. Support the secondary use of graywater for landscaping.
8. Support rainwater collection and reuse for irrigation.
9. Support rebates and other economic incentive programs for graywater and rainwater collection systems, partnering with the CWA, MWD, State and Federal Government for funding.
10. Support desalination projects with regional partners and with Mexico.
11. Support local and regional brackish groundwater desalination projects.
12. Support new technological improvements in the field of desalination.
13. Support activities that help divert storm water to local reservoirs and underground aquifers, including Low Impact Development (LID) projects and policies.
14. Support the construction of regional storage reservoirs or enlargement of existing reservoirs as needed.

**COUNCIL POLICY**

15. Support programs to recharge, protect and improve the yield from local and regional groundwater basins.
16. Maintain an emergency reserve storage of water as specified in City Council Policy 400-04 for the purpose of cushioning the impact of temporary interruptions in the delivery of imported water. Such storage to be in an amount sufficient to cover reasonably anticipated needs until repairs can be completed to supply lines in the event of unforeseen emergencies or natural disasters.

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